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ABSTRACT

The experiences gained in developing a competency based teacher education program (CBTE) for secondary social studies are related in this speech. The program originated from the following needs: to revamp the traditional education program; to develop an experiential base reflecting the realities of public schools; to examine various models of teacher education; and to specify more precisely the outcomes sought. The results of the program thus far are described as constituting a first step toward a final CBTE program. The bases for the program were a Concerns Model, a setting appropriate for teacher education, the allowing of education students into schools as soon as possible, and the specifying of performances sought in measurable terms. It is admitted that performance objectives, but not genuine competencies, have been specified. An external monitoring or evaluative scheme was not implemented at the inception of the program, although data collected does reveal patterns in the areas of student performances, attrition rate, and placement success. Critical problems which remain are identifying and specifying competencies and assessment procedures, counseling and screening functions, developing a positive self-concept to deal with values in the social studies, and placement in public schools for student teaching. References are included. (Author/KSM)

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EXPERIENCES IN DEVELOPING A COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

Presentation at the College and University Faculty Assembly of the National Council for the Social Studies, San Francisco, November 21, 1973

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MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: Or Boy, Do We Have Experiences To Tell!

While the topic for this presentation is "experiences in developing a CBTE program for secondary social studies," the title "Mission Impossible" seems more appropriate. The reasons are many, and they may not be unlike those any of you could provide. The principal reason for problems with developing a CBTE is that it is a changing "ball game."

In this sense, we're reminded of the young boy learning to play baseball. The boy was scarcely able to hold a bat but he wanted desperately to learn how to play the game. He would swing with abandon and occasionally hit the ball. The real thrill, though, was running toward third base (or second, or any direction that suited his fancy). It was a great game until his older brother, only a little older and wiser about the way the game was played, kept interrupting the play to tell the younger to run to first base. "Why?", asked the younger brother. "Because that's the way the game is played," countered the older without giving any reasons. "But I don't want to run that way." "You have to." And the bickering finally brought the activity to an end.

Is this to be the fate of CBTE? Are the younger kids (the teachers in the field, even the students) going to run wherever they damn well please, but enjoy themselves immensely? Are the older brothers (the college faculty) going to demand the game be played according to the rules they have known? And who will umpire to keep the game going? The state departments of education, which are requiring that the game be played according to their conceptions? Can they be free from a conflict of interest? What if some other kids (public school administrators) refuse to allow the game unless the batter makes himself

presentable in terms of dress and attitude? What if the younger kids say they refuse to play, whatever the rules? Just whose ball game is this and in whose ball park will it be played?

The younger kids, the teachers and professional education students, seem to be denying the need for the theory associated with foundations courses. They seem unconcerned about how professional education has been structured and conducted. They seem equally unconcerned about the charge, levelled by their older brothers, that they will be preparing "technicians," not "educators." It appears they regard their career orientation and on-the-job skills as equal to, if not superior to, campus-bound coursework. Moreover, they are willing to make mistakes, like their older brothers. Will there be problems? You better believe it.

How Did We Get Here?

The origins at our particular institution are easily recalled. First, there was a recognized need to revamp a traditional B.S. in Education program (educational and adolescent psychology--six hours, methods and materials--four hours, measurement and evaluation--three hours, student teaching--eight hours, and seminar--three hours) with its almost exclusive reliance upon discrete courses and experiences. There was also a felt need to develop an experiential base reflecting more closely what was occurring in public schools. Third, there was the need to examine various models of teacher education to determine what others were doing (Fattu, 1968). Fourth, there was a need to specify more precisely the outcomes sought for programs. The latter suggested examination of CBTE programs.

CBTE, too, has antecedents: (a) the demand for the application of philosophical and psychological principles of learning into practice, and an acknowledgement of the lack of data to prescribe any particular teaching mode because of the idiosyncratic nature of learning (Smith, 1968; Siegel & Siegel, 1967); (b) the desire for more precision and publicity with regard to the goals of instruction; and (c) the appeal of systems analysis to examine the parts of teacher education without destroying the holistic nature of the system (Easton, 1965; Buckley, 1967).

The result for us was the program described here (See Appendix 1). It was not a full-blown CBTE program, but a cautious, first step. The bases for the program were:

(1) the Concerns Model (Fuller, 1970). It identified the concern for self, then a concern for the self with pupils, and finally the concern for the self as teacher with pupils. Attention was paid to the sociological notions of self-identity (Strauss, 1964; Cooley, 1909; Merton, 1964) and interactionalism (Meadows, 1966), as well as the humanistic (Rogers, 1969; Raths et al., 1966). The intent was to encourage in the teacher education student an ego strength, a sense of potency, that would prevail despite the somewhat paralyzing effects of working within an organizational setting (Moeller and Charters, 1965).

(2) linked to this was the need to examine directly the organizational setting in which the teacher education student will work. Professional literature abounds with research (Bidwell, 1965; Carlson, 1964; Iannaccone, 1964; March, 1965; Jackson, 1968), as well as with more popular accounts (Kaufman, 1964; Hunter, 1954; Kozol, 1967) of

life in schools. The ego strength must be such that the teacher will not only survive, but will be functional.

(3) still another basis was the need for the experiential--getting students into schools as early as possible as observers at least, then as teaching aides, and finally as student teachers over extended periods in genuine teaching situations.

(4) last there was an attempt to specify in measurable and public terms the student performances that were sought. This most clearly identifies with the CBTE model, though, in fact, it has a humanistic, integrative thrust rather than the mechanistic one so severely criticized by professionals in the field (Broudy, 1972) and out (Ward, 1973; Kilgore, 1973).

How Far Have We Come?

Candidly, we have only reached the point of specifying what might be called performance objectives, not genuine "competencies." The distinction, we believe, is between (a) course objectives in terms of student performances and (b) specifying performances, identifying assessment procedures to evaluate each performance, and suggesting instructional activities to facilitate the performances. The latter, we suggest, probably requires modules, allows for more individualization and personalization of instruction, permits more flexibility in terms of time, and provides for more immediate response to the student. Our next step will be a modular scheme, rather than the courses which presently exist.

Another admitted failure was to omit an external monitoring or evaluative scheme at the onset. Our data tend to be largely descriptive. Yet, we are beginning to obtain some patterns.

1. In terms of levels of performance--

   On a ten point scale, the first three groups to complete the program have attained a mean of 8.7 with regard to the 35 competencies required in the full semester student teaching situation. We have nothing with which to make comparison, because the previous program relied on an evaluation form that defied logic or common sense.

2. Correlation between participation evaluations and student teaching performances--

   This has proved both frustrating and disappointing. The correlations were a positive .30, .51, and .54 for the first three groups, but reversed itself with the last group (-.64). There are many reasons for the inconsistencies, among which is the fact that we have not used a form consistent with the two experiences. Also we do not have the consistency between cooperating teachers' expectations of Participants and Student Teachers.

   The need for the correlations is to help with the "counseling-screening" process through students go prior to making student teaching assignments in centers. The obvious intent is to be able to "predict" with some certainty the ability of the students to succeed in student teaching. The fact that we have had to ask only two student teachers to withdraw suggests a degree of success, however.

3. Attrition--

   Of a total of 195 students who enrolled in the program and have had an opportunity to complete student teaching, only 61 have done so. In other words, the rate of successful completion of the program is 31%.

Principally we believe this is due to self-assessment opportunities, or the Concerns Model. Students were afforded ample time and experience to plumb their feelings and to consider what the commitment to teaching means.

A second reason is what might be called the rites of passage, or socialization process that we, as instructors, impose. We are hard-nosed, but humane, we like to think. We ask them to believe in what they prepare to do, to foresee the problems and promises, and to become the teachers they would like to have in public schools.

4. Placement--

While students are more concerned than we with these statistics, they are both a mark of the success of the program and a potential source of satisfaction for us. Thus far we are less than satisfied.

Placement for the first 37 graduates, for whom there is known information, is twenty of twenty-four. According to the Annual Reports of the Office of Student Affairs, Placement and Career Planning Division, 11 graduates are teaching in their field, 7 attended graduate school, and 2 are employed in other fields. Four remain unemployed. For some reason, 13 have not responded to the inquiry sent them.

What Problems Do We Face?

It will not be any surprise to the listener that we have experienced some problems. Some have been described earlier. Some more critical problems that remain are:

1. Identifying and specifying competencies and assessment procedures.
   - What competencies should a social studies teacher have?
   - How can their performances be assessed?
   - Who should do the assessment?
   - Should there be a professional licensure based on competencies?
2. Counseling and Screening.
   - How can we retain the most promising and counsel out the unpromising?
   - Who should make the decision as to who is or is not promising?
   - What criteria should be used?
   - What do you do with a paranoid?
   - What do you do with a young man 4'10" tall, weighing 96 pounds, who is a proclaimed Marxist and scores 185 on the Rokeach Dogmatism Scale?
   - Or a quiet, hard-working student who suddenly deviates from his lesson plan while student teaching in a conservative public school and reads "Student As Nigger" (unedited) to a ninth grade social studies class?
3. Developing a positive self-concept to deal with values in the social studies.
   - How do we prepare students who seem to fit the characteristics of teachers identified by Ryans and others?
   - How do we equip them to function in organizational settings analyzed by Carlson and Iannaccone, and described by Kaufman, Kozol, and Cuban?

4. Placement in public schools for student teaching.

   - Who should "screen" before placement, if anyone?
   - On whose terms will student teachers be placed, the public school or the college?
   - What kinds of cooperating teachers are needed (skills, attitudes, etc.)?
   - What roles should college supervisors, public school teachers, and student teachers play in the student teaching arrangement?

These questions have plagued us and will probably continue to do so. Experience, analysis, and development of appropriate theoretical underpinnings will all help, but the larger problem remains--whose ball game is it? What new arrangements of cooperating institutions are necessary to bring about the desired changes? Political scientists could supply us with the answer that whoever holds the power will determine the future and power generally follows the purse. Can distinct agencies be established and funded to carry out the required tasks? Will teacher centers be the answer and, if so, will they be their own local education agencies, funded and responsible for the expenditures of their funds? To whom would they answer if they held this power?

CBTE is no pipe dream or monster to be ridded of. It is becoming a reality, even if it is only a phase through which professional education will pass. Answers must be sought through the combination of experience, theory, and analysis. The first step is giving attention to it.

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APPENDIX I

CURRENT PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Edu 240 - Introduction to the Teaching of Secondary Social Studies

I.* Social Interaction (Personal Skills)
II. The Nature of the Learner and Learning (Elements of Educational and Adolescent Psychology)
III. The Nature of Teaching (Curriculum, Evaluative Skills, Instructional Objectives)
IV.* Social, Cultural, Physical Setting of Schools (Observations of Schools; School Organization - Formal and Informal; Goals; Teacher in the Organization)

Edu 342 - Components of the Teaching Act for Secondary Social Studies

I. Teaching Behavior Discrimination (Distinguish categories of teacher behavior including simulations)
II. Lesson Planning (Selecting learning theories, identifying components of plans, writing and teaching plans)
III. Assessment of Learning (Identifying and applying testing procedures and types of tests)
IV.* Participation (15 classroom hours of teaching in a public school in tutorial, small, and large group sessions)
V.* Instructional Media (Identifying, using, and preparing media for instruction)

Edu 343 - Professional Semester for Secondary Social Studies (Based on completion of "Competencies")

I. Student Teaching

A. Observation and Orientation (1 week)
B. First Student Teaching Experience (approx. 6 weeks)
C. Transition (approx. 1 week)
D. Second Student Teaching Experience (approx. 6 weeks)
E. Phase-out

II. Seminar

A. Reading and discussion
B. Resource persons

III. Measurement and Evaluation

A. Identify testing procedures of tests and interpret
B. Write, administer, score, and interpret self-made tests

IV. Methods

A. Observation cycles
B. Identifying curricular materials
C. Refine teaching skills

*New